



# UPDATE IRAQ

Story by Heike Hasenauer

**A**S summer drew to a close, tensions mounted for coalition forces in Iraq. On Aug. 19 the worst single tragedy, to that date, occurred there since President George W. Bush declared an end to combat operations May 1.

The United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, located in the Canal Hotel, was bombed during a meeting attended by numerous representatives of nongovernmental-aid organizations. Among the 23 people killed was

Sergio Vieira de Mello, the U.N.'s highest-ranking official in Iraq. The following day more than 80 Shi'ite Muslims were killed by a car bomb while worshipping in a Baghdad mosque.

Disaster also struck in Afghanistan, where nine policemen were killed in an ambush. Afghan officials reported that some 100 people had been killed over a 10-day period in late August. They blamed the Taliban.

As Americans voiced concerns that the U.S. military was spread too thin,

Bush vowed that the several hundred marines sent to Liberia to quell unrest resulting from 14 years of civil war, would redeploy from the African nation by Oct. 1. At that time, he said, U.N. peacekeepers and security forces from neighboring African nations would have arrived.

The new U.S. military intervention came at about the same time U.S. intelligence reports indicated terrorist factions had attempted to procure shoulder-fired missiles in the United States to down U.S. airliners. America's leaders, and U.S. military officials on the ground in Iraq, nonetheless remained optimistic.

LTC Brian Drinkwine, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Battalion, 505th Infantry Regiment, said of his soldiers after the U.N. headquarters bombing: "Their resolve motivates me."

"The civilized world will not be intimidated," Bush said. At the same time, he reminded the Iraqi people that the villains who perpetrate senseless acts of terrorism are their enemies.

Officials in Moscow called the suicide bombing, which was carried out by a man in a flatbed truck loaded



◀ L. Paul Bremer III, U.S. chief administrator in Iraq, speaks with reporters after holding a conference at Mosul's Civilian Military Operations Center.

SFC Derek Gaines



SGT Michael Bracken

A tear gas canister explodes near Mosul's city hall while 101st Abn. Div. soldiers are dispersing a violent crowd of protesters.

with explosives, "barbaric."

The string of tragedies overshadowed the coalition's triumphs of mid-August and September. As examples, U.S. Central Command reported the capture of Ali Hassan Majeed, a scientist in the former Saddam regime who earned the nickname "Chemical Ali," for overseeing chemical weapons attacks that killed thousands of Iraq's Kurds. And Kurdish troops had

captured one of Saddam's former vice presidents, Taha Yassin Ramadan, in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul and turned him over to coalition forces.

And a few weeks earlier, Saddam's brutal sons Uday and Qusay were killed in a fierce battle with 101st Abn. Div. soldiers and special-operations

forces in northern Iraq.

Countless humanitarian-aid missions were conducted as well, and included food distribution, refurbishment of hospitals and schools, and restoration of water and oil pipelines.

Coalition forces had worked for weeks to improve Iraq's long-neglected infrastructure and get resources up and running again. But just as they did, saboteurs destroyed them.

Military officials said the saboteurs' goal is to create increasing dissent among the Iraqi people, so that the supportive majority will eventually lose faith and patience with coalition

forces and rally against them.

CENTCOM officials took turns sitting on the "hot seat," trying to explain to the world at large why soldiers and civilians who are working so diligently to help the Iraqi people are being attacked.

Within four months after Bush declared an end to major combat operations in Iraq, assailants wielding rocket-propelled grenades and using remote-controlled bombs had killed 60 U.S. soldiers.

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, chief U.S. administrator in Iraq, said the attackers were believed to be



► Trained by the West Virginia Army National Guard's 156th Military Police Detachment, members of the first class of the Mosul Interim Police Academy end their graduation ceremony by taking an oath to protect and serve Iraq's citizens.



SGT Michael Bracken





Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, question a male Iraqi at a checkpoint established during a search for two motorcyclists who had been terrorizing several Mosul neighborhoods and the local police station.

among remnants of Saddam Hussein's security forces, Fedayeen fighters, and former Iraqi POWs who had been released by coalition forces when the war ended.

Shortages of basic needs, including electricity, had for months aggravated the attacks against coalition forces, CENTCOM officials said.

News reports quoted many Iraqis as saying Iraq was no better off than it had been before coalition forces arrived. They blamed the coalition for post-war looting and other criminal activity, including drug- and arms-smuggling that they said had not existed before.

A group calling itself the Armed

Islamic Movement for al Qaeda — in an audiotape aired on Al-Arabiya television — claimed responsibility for some of the attacks. A day before the U.N. headquarters bombing in Baghdad, a tape believed to have been made by members of al Qaeda had urged Iraqis to carry out attacks.

"We have to counsel patience," Bremer said. "It's a difficult message for Iraqis to hear. But when you have 35 years of economic mismanagement, as this country had under Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath Party, you can't fix those problems in three weeks or three months."

U.S. officials remained confident that the senseless attacks against U.S. and coalition soldiers would subside as



◀ Soldiers from the 101st Abn. Div. search for a man who lobbed a grenade at them while they were dispersing protesters in Mosul.



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additional members of the former regime were identified and brought to justice. The July 22 deaths of Saddam's sons were expected to have a long-term positive effect.

For Iraqis once terrorized by the mere thought of what the Saddam regime could do to those who didn't support it, the possibility that the ousted dictator and his sons might still be alive had instilled fear about cooperating with coalition forces. U.S. officials predicted that with the sons' deaths, fears of future brutality from Saddam's successors would subside.

While some Iraqis who collaborated with coalition forces were still being threatened, hundreds of them volunteered to join the new Iraqi

police force in August, to help bring stability and security to their communities, CENTCOM officials reported.

And officials of the Coalition Provisional Authority, or CPA, reported that production of refined oil products — gasoline, diesel and cooking gas — was rising.

BG Frank Helmick, 101st Abn. Div. assistant division commander for operations, said that while Iraq has only half of the electrical power it needs, coalition officials and the CPA are working on solutions.

Among those are buying power from Turkey and Syria, seeking donations of large power plants from humanitarian-assistance organizations and rehabilitating existing plants.



Soldiers from the Army Reserve's 418th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to the 4th Infantry Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom, deliver water to villagers in Diyala Province.

SSG Alfred Davis





Among Iraq's postwar milestones is its political transformation, Bremer told attendees at the World Economic Forum. Iraq's political council will "nominate ministry heads and form commissions to recommend policies concerning issues significant to Iraq's future, from reform of the educational curriculum to plans for a telecommunications infrastructure to proposals for stimulating the private sector."

Among the most notable changes for U.S. soldiers in Iraq over the summer was news that some of them were going home.

Among those scheduled to redeploy were soldiers of the 3rd

◀ Members of the Army Reserve's 422nd CA Bn. share smiles with local Iraqis after restoring power to the Yusufijah area.

▼ LTC David Jones of the 354th CA Brigade watches as Iraqi workers load food, as well as cooking and cleaning supplies, at a World Food Programs storage site in Baghdad.







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Infantry Div. who had been in Al Fallujah, a hotbed of opposition about 30 miles west of Baghdad, helping to train that city's police force in July. They had been among the first U.S. troops into the Persian Gulf region before Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

Many of the 3rd Inf. Div. soldiers drew satisfaction from knowing that Iraqis had joined neighborhood-watch groups to make neighborhoods safer. Residents had joined district advisory councils as a step toward improved civil societies. And, under a free Iraqi press, more than 100 Iraqi newspapers had been established, Bremer said.

At Qayyarah West Airfield, near Mosul, soldiers of the 101st Aviation Regiment had been delivering truck-loads of water to villagers and surfacing dirt roads. And they had plans to build or renovate schools and construct a water pipeline.

Coalition forces also started civil-affairs projects in various areas of Iraq, among them completion of a bridge across the Tigris River.

➤ SGT Jay Maples of the 422nd CA Bn. guards a newly built pedestrian bridge in Yusufiyah.

CPL Jacob H. Smith







- ▲ Civil affairs soldiers uncover a cache of Russian-made surface-to-air missiles in downtown Baghdad.
- Weapons caches continue to be found throughout Iraq.

In August COL Michael Linnington, commander of the 101st's 3rd Bde., said the division had completed renovations estimated at \$11 million. Those included repair of banks, schools, police stations, hospitals, clinics, courthouses and telecommunications sites.

And the coalition forces' highly publicized, if controversial, early morning raids on Iraqi homes and other buildings were not without positive results.

When soldiers of the 82nd Abn. Div., 1st Armored Div. and 315th Psychological Operations Company searched a building and grounds of the former Ba'ath Party in Baghdad, they retrieved a sizeable illegal weapons cache, CENTCOM officials reported. It was one of many such raids.



Cpl. Mace M. Gratz, USMC

The operations were conducted to reduce crime and make the streets safe for residents and U.S. and coalition forces, officials said.

In response to media queries about the safety of U.S. and coalition forces, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said 30,000 of the estimated 60,000 Iraqi police officers needed to maintain order were on the job.

And, as far as what's going on in the hearts and minds of U.S. and coalition forces — TV viewers can only guess. The morale of U.S.

soldiers is high, Linnington told reporters at a video teleconference from Iraq in August.

"Our soldiers remain motivated, I believe, because they understand the importance of this mission and are driven by the knowledge that if we don't win here, we could relive the horrors of Sept. 11," he said.

As this issue went to press some 140,000 U.S. troops and 24,000 coalition troops from 18 nations were deployed in Iraq, according to CENTCOM officials. 🇺🇸





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► COL Michael S. Linnington, commander of the 101st Airborne's 3rd Brigade, cuts a ceremonial cake during the reopening ceremony of a medical treatment center in Tall' Afar.

▼ Soldiers from the 101st and Iraqi citizens celebrate the reopening of Rebea's train station on the Syrian and Iraqi border.



SSG Kevin Wastler (both)